

## Because I Could Not Stop for Death

A Poem by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886).

a lyric poem on the theme of death.

The poem contains six stanzas.

Each with four lines. A four-line stanza is called a quatrain.

\*\*The journey to the grave begins in Stanza 1.

\*\*Rhyme in first stanzas is ABCD.

The poem was first published in 1890 in Poems.

Series 1, a collection of Miss Dickinson's poems.

The overall theme of the poem seems to be that death is not to be feared since it is a natural part of the endless cycle of nature.

Alliteration: gazing grain

Anaphora We passed the school, where children strove At recess, in the ring; We passed the fields of gazing grain, We passed the setting sun.

Personification: ( We passed the setting sun) >>Comparison of the sun to a person

Personification: We passed the fields of gazing grain

## Commentary and Theme

"Because I Could Not Stop for Death" reveals Emily Dickinson's calm acceptance of death.

### Speaker:

A woman who speaks from the grave.

She says she calmly accepted death.

In fact, she seemed to welcome death as a suitor whom she planned to "marry."

### Death:

Suitor who called for the narrator to escort her to eternity.

### Immortality:

A passenger in the carriage.

### Children:

Boys and girls at play in a schoolyard. They symbolize childhood as a stage of life.

House = the grave

**Gossamer my gown:** Thin wedding dress for the speaker's marriage to Death.

● قماش رقيق رديء : فستان الزفاف رقيق للزواج المتكلم الى الموت.

**tippet:** Scarf for neck or shoulders.

● اللفاع :وشاح للرقبة والكتفين.

**tulle:** Netting.

● التل: نسج.

**house:** Speaker's tomb.

● البيت: قبر المتكلم.

**cornice:** Horizontal molding along the top of a wall.

● الكورنيش: تشكيل أفقي على طول الجزء العلوي من الجدار.

**Since . . . centuries:** The length of time she has been in the tomb. .

**Civility:** kindness

A pile of destruction **Mound:**

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# Hope is the Thing with Feathers

## A Poem by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

**Hope** is planning to stay. “Hope rests in our soul the way a bird rests on its perch.

**Hope** is similar to a bird because of its free and independent spirit

“**Thing**” denotes that hope is something abstract and vague.

“**Feathers** represent hope, because feathers offer the image of flying away to a new hope and a new beginning.”

The line “**And sings the tune—without the words,**” gives the reader a sense that hope is universal.

**Dickinson’s poem** further broadens the metaphor by giving hope delicate and sweet characteristics in the word “perches.

**Dickinson’s choice** of the word also suggests that, like a bird, hope is planning to stay. “

**The second stanza** depicts hope’s continuous presence.

“**gale,**” a horrible windstorm.

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“If We Must Die”

Wrote by

Claude McKay Limns

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The Negro Speaks of Rivers

By Langston Hughes

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## The Story of an Hour

By Kate Chopin (1851-1904)

### Type of Work

"The Story of an Hour" is a **short story** centering on a young married woman of the late nineteenth century

as she reacts to a report that her husband has died in a train accident.

Was first published in December 6, 1894---under the old title "[The Dream of an Hour.](#)"

**Setting:** The action takes place in a single hour in an American home in the last decade of the 19 Century.

The story observes the classical unities of time, place, and action.

Mrs. Mallard breaks down, crying fitfully, then goes upstairs to a room to be alone. There she sits down and gazes out a window, sobbing. It is spring. Birds sing, and the trees burst with new life. It had been raining, but now patches of blue sky appear.

The opening sentence of the story foreshadows the ending

Third Person = Point of View

## Symbols

**Springtime:** The new, exciting life that Mrs. Mallard thinks is awaiting her.

Patches of **Blue Sky:** Emergence of her new life.

## Characters

**Mrs. Louise Mallard:** Young, attractive woman who mourns the reported death of her husband but exults in the freedom she will enjoy in the years to come.

**Brently Mallard:** Mrs. Mallard's husband.

**Josephine:** Mrs. Mallard's sister.

**Richards:** Friend of Brently Mallard.

**Doctors:** Physicians who arrive too late to save Mrs. Mallard.

## Theme

### Oppression

Society in **late nineteenth century** expected women to keep house, cook, bear and rear children— but little more.

### Repression

Louise Mallard appears to have been a weak-willed woman, one who probably repressed her desire to control her destiny.

## Examples of figures of speech are the following:

**Paradox** Revealed in half-concealing

**Metaphor** Storm of grief

**Metaphor/Personification** Physical exhaustion that haunted her body

**Metaphor** Breath of rain

**Alliteration** Song which someone was singing

**Metaphor/Personification** Clouds that had met

**Alliteration** the sounds, the scents

**Metaphor/Personification** Thing that was approaching to possess her

**Oxymoron** Monstrous joy

**Simile** she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory

**Paradox** Joy that kills

**The phrase is also ironic**,,,,,, since the doctors mistakenly believe that Mrs. Mallard was happy to see her husband

## The Tell-Tale Heart

By Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

**The Narrator:** Deranged unnamed person who tries to convince the reader that he is sane.

**Theme 2:** Fear of discovery can bring about discovery.

**Personification** Death in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him and enveloped the victim. [Here, Death is a person.]

**Simile:** [The simile is the comparison of the ray to the thread of the spider]

**Setting:** The story opens in an undisclosed locale, possibly a prison,

### Characters

**The Narrator:** Deranged unnamed person who tries to convince the reader that he is sane.

**The Old Man:** Seemingly harmless elder who has a hideous "evil eye" that unnerves the narrator.

**Neighbor:** Person who hears a shriek coming from the house of the narrator and the old man,

then reports it to the police.

**Three Policemen:** Officers who search the narrator's house after a neighbor reports hearing a shriek.

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### **Type of Work**

Short story in the horror genre that focuses on the psyche of the narrator.

### **Year of Publication**

was first published in the winter of **1843** in The Pioneer, a Boston magazine.

**Point of View** The story is told in first-person point of view by an unreliable narrator.

# The adventures Huckleberry Finn

By Mark Twain (1835-1910)

**Type of Work.** The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a novel that does not fit neatly into a single genre

## Composition and Publication Dates

Mark Twain wrote The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn **between 1876 and 1883.**

## Setting

**The action** takes place in St. Petersburg, Missouri, and at various locations along the banks of the Mississippi River in Missouri, Arkansas, and Illinois.

**The time** is the middle of the 19th Century, before the Civil War.

## Main characters

**Protagonist:** Huckleberry Finn

**Antagonist:** Society and Its Rules and Laws

**Jim:** The escaped slave who joins Huck.

**Widow Douglas:** Kindly but straitlaced woman who takes Huck into her home.

**Miss Watson:** The widow's sister and owner of Jim.

**Judge Thatcher:** Judge who looks out for Huck's welfare.

He is a simple, loyal, and trusting man whose common sense helps guide Huck. In a way, he serves as a surrogate father for Huck.

**Pap Finn:** Huck's drunken .

He is greedy, abusive father, who is nearing age fifty. His racism is symptomatic of the racism that infected society as a whole in nineteenth-century America.

**Mrs. Hale** finds a box containing a piece of silk wrapped around a dead bird with a wrung neck.

## Point of View

Huckleberry Finn tells the story in first-person point of view.

**Theme** is freedom.

## Samples of American Fiction: Novel

**Freedom:** all human beings are free, independent, and equal members of society.

**The Primacy of the Moral Law:** The moral law supersedes government law. By protecting the black slave Jim, Huck breaks man-made law and feels guilty.

But he refuses to turn Jim in because his moral instincts tell him he is doing the right thing.

**Intuitive Wisdom:** Wisdom comes from the heart, not the head.

**A Child Shall Lead:** a little child shall lead them.

Huck is portrayed as a boy who had a better grasp of morality than the often corrupt civilization around him—a boy worth imitating for his virtues.

**Love of Money**

The love of money is the root of all evil. It is the love of money, Huck's that prompts Pap Finn to gain custody of Huck.

**Climax**

The climax occurs when Tom and Huck free Jim, and Tom—who has suffered a bullet wound in the leg—tells Huck that a provision in Miss Watson's will has freed Jim.

### Structure and Style

Like the Mississippi River itself, the plot flows around bends, through darkness and fog, and into bright sunlight.

## Trifles

A Play by Susan Glaspell

(1876-1948)

### Setting

The time is the early twentieth century during cold weather. The action takes place in the kitchen of a farmhouse in the American Midwest.

### Characters

**John Wright:** Murder victim who lived with his wife in a farmhouse.

**Minnie Foster Wright:** Wife of John Wright and his accused murderer.

### Type of Work and Year of Publication

Trifles is a one-act play centering on two women who discover murder clues that county officials regard as trivial.

George Cram Cook, founded in Massachusetts in 1915.

### Climax

The climax occurs when the two women discover the dead bird,

### Symbols

**Bird:**

Mrs. Wright's spirit.

### **Cage:**

John Wright's oppression (or immuration) of his wife and her spirit.

### **Unevenly Sewn Quilt Block:**

Mrs. Wright's disturbed mental condition

### **Rope:**

Minnie Wright's usurpation of male power

### **Irony**

Sheriff Peters and County Attorney George Henderson pride themselves on their powers of detection and logical reasoning. But it is the two women, Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale, who discover the clues and establish a motive amid seemingly innocuous items in the Wright home.

### **Themes**

#### **Casting Off Male Oppression:**

In 1916, when Glaspell wrote *Trifles*, male-dominated society continued to deny women the right to vote and severely limited their opportunities in offices, industries, legislatures, and the marketplace.

#### **Women's Intuition**

So-called women's intuition demonstrates its power in this play when Mrs. Hale and Mrs.